



Michael F. Easley
Governor

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William G. Ross Jr.
Secretary, DENR

DENR ADOPTS SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

EFFORT TO PROTECT RESOURCES AFFECTS ALL ASPECTS OF WORK

By CHARLIE PEEK
Public Information Officer

Protecting natural resources has always been “job one” for the parks system, but the effort now reaches into every aspect of the NC Division of Parks and Recreation with the release last month of a departmental policy and procedures for sustainability.

The documents offer direction on many wide-ranging activities such as copying memos, operating vehicles and buying cleaning supplies.

The goal, according to the policy signed by Bill Ross, Secretary of the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

DENR is determined to be a leader among state agencies in complying with the governor’s executive order to make state operations more sustainable. The best way to do



SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES IN THE PARKS SYSTEM INCLUDE THIS WOOD/POLYMER DECK MADE OF RECYCLED MATERIALS AT LUMBER RIVER STATE PARK.

that is to give employees ideas on how to do their jobs while protecting resources as well as to make environmental education readily available, according to the policy.

“Our parks system already is a leader in sustaining our natural resources,” said Phil McKnelly, division director. “And, I expect our people to continue to lead the way in

protecting the environment. The conservation ethic is just a natural extension of what we do every day.

“I’m confident that if we approach this effort in the same spirit, we can easily go above and beyond what the policy mandates.”

For years, the parks system has been aggressive in

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Department of Environment and Natural Resources

UP CLOSE & "PERSONNEL"

Scott Taylor is the new maintenance mechanic at Medoc Mountain State Park. Taylor has been self-employed the past five years as a contractor and has experience operating cranes and other heavy equipment.

Carlotta T. Mitchell is the new office assistant at William B. Umstead State park. Ms. Mitchell has an AAS in accounting and several years

experience performing various office functions.

James Lee Ledgerwood is the new park ranger at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area. Ledgerwood has a bachelor's degree in forestry/wildlife from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

David M. Downer is the new western piedmont regional trails specialist working at the

Yorkshire center. Downer has a master's degree in cultural geography. He comes to the division from Utah where he worked as an outdoor recreation planner with Dixie National Forest.

SUSTAINABILITY

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exploring sustainable construction techniques, making use of alternative waste management and recycling. Last year, recycling centers in parks collected about 20,000 pounds of aluminum, plastics, glass, paper and miscellaneous items.

Recently, the division has made progress in programs to recycle Christmas trees for dune renewal and to make use of alternative fuel vehicles.

The renewed push toward sustainability throughout DENR was sparked by an executive order last year that "directs state agencies to develop and incorporate policies and practices into their daily operations that preserve natural resources, conserve energy, eliminate waste and emissions and lessen overall environmental impact."

DENR, adopting a "top-down approach," responded by appointing liaisons in each division to help develop initiatives as members of a sustainability team. The division's liaison officer is North District Superintendent Susan Tillotson.

That team developed procedures covering seven focus areas of operations: paper reduction, purchasing, energy

From The Director's Desk

Dear Fellow Employees,

One thing becomes apparent when reading through this month's issue of The Steward. The people in our division are just as resourceful as ever in finding ways to get the job done despite unusual obstacles and limited budgets.

At Hanging Rock State Park, Superintendent Tommy Wagoner enlisted the aid of the National Guard to move tons of materials to the site of renovations to the trail that leads to Hidden Falls and Window Falls. At Morrow Mountain, Superintendent Tim McCree seized the opportunity to add a boardwalk and fishing pier by approaching CP&L for help during a lake drawdown that occurs once every five years. Superintendent Jody Merritt and his rangers added an extra touch of authenticity to Fort Macon with an 80 foot-tall flagpole that replicates one originally standing at the fort in the 19th Century. And, the staff at Falls Lake demonstrates how resource protection and environmental education are managed during the off-season at the busy recreation areas.

It's obvious that our people never shy away from a difficult task. On the contrary, it often seems that the greater the challenge, the more that people in the Division of Parks and Recreation rise to the occasion. Unfortunately, based on recent budget news, it looks like we will have even more opportunities to "shine" during the next year or two.

Sincerely,

Phil

Philip K. McNelly

resource usage, office operations, transportation, fleet maintenance/procurement and construction/development/leasing.

The committee found for instance that paper is the second most expensive resource that DENR employees consume. In 1999-2000, state agencies spent more than \$24 million on office paper.

The procedures outline 13 ways to save paper, from making more use of email to printing on the back sides of used paper.

Other examples from the list of procedures mandate that employees purchase goods that are “durable, reusable and recyclable,” to consider leasing some office equipment, to establish recycling centers for office supplies such as folders and binders and to require new state buildings to use energy efficient designs. Alternative fuel vehicles should be bought when possible and practical, and employees should make efforts to get off mailing lists for useless journals, according to the document.

“Many of these procedures are simply common sense and save money as well as natural resources,” McKnelly said. “And, that’s always



THE PARKS SYSTEM IS MAKING AN ATTEMPT TO USE ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES WHEN POSSIBLE.

another important byproduct in the way we do our jobs.”

To find the policy and procedures on the web, go to the division’s home page at www.ncsparks.net. Click “Explore Our Division,” then click “Sustainability Initiatives.”

Amen corner

The following is a letter sent to the division headquarters in Raleigh. Have you had more good words on the division and its employees? Send them along to The Steward so we can share.

Sir,

On Memorial Day weekend, I was injured in a fall necessitating knee surgery and rehabilitation (which continues), while hiking on top of the Kings Mountain pinnacle.

First to arrive was Park Ranger Jane Conolly, who walked several miles to respond to my accident and quickly immobilized my leg. Several rescue squads and Park Ranger Kelly Cooke, who was off duty, arrived shortly thereafter and transported me by stretcher a considerable distance down the mountain, through rough terrain, to a waiting ambulance.

The rescue was efficiently orchestrated by Superintendent Joe Sox of Crowder’s Mountain State Park, which lessened the trauma of my fall. Citizens who use our state parks should be proud of the professionalism and high degree of training of our Park Rangers to perform both the routine and when called upon, first aid and rescue.

I am very proud of their efforts in my behalf. In addition, I appreciate all those involved, especially since they stayed late into the night on a holiday. Thanks again!

Charles Blair
Belmont

GUARD HELPS RENOVATE PARK TRAIL

By TAMARA WARD
Publications Coordinator

When the Civilian Conservation Corps built the trail that leads to Hidden Falls and Window Falls at what became Hanging Rock State Park, the trail was built to last. Since the trail was created, the only major maintenance it required was the replacement of some timbers in the 1980s.

But, millions of footsteps after its construction, the second most popular trail in the park — next to the trail that leads to Hanging Rock itself — was in need of a facelift. Time, weather and the wear from generations of hikers eroded the trail until, in some places, hikers had to scramble over tree roots or tramp across exposed rock to reach the falls.

“We were just loving the trail to death,” said Tommy Waggoner, park superintendent. “We were destroying the resource people were going to see just from erosion.”

To repair the trail, the park needed gravel to bring sections up to grade and timbers to create water bars, add steps and form viewing areas. And, the park also needed 65 tons of rock to create steps in the steeper areas. The rocks for the steps — 113 in all — averaged 6 feet long, 6 inches thick and were 18 to 30 inches wide, weighing 900 to 1,000 pounds each. But instead of the sounds of bush hogs and bulldozers ripping apart the environment to make way to deliver the necessary materials, the trail-building rocks were transported to the whirring sound of helicopter blades. Most of the project’s building materials were transported to the trail using UH-60L Blackhawk helicopters flown by



A NATIONAL GUARD HELICOPTER EVENTUALLY TRANSPORTED 65 TONS OF ROCK TO BUILD STEPS ON THE TRAIL TO HIDDEN FALLS AND WINDOW FALLS AT HANGING ROCK STATE PARK.



PHOTOS OF THE TRAIL BEFORE (LEFT) AND AFTER (BELOW) THE RENOVATION PROJECT SHOW A DRAMATIC CHANGE.



National Guardsmen from Salisbury.

Lance White, the division’s project manager for the trail renovation, said that the division saved money — lots of money — by using helicopters in-

stead of transporting the materials traditionally, which would have required cutting a path for heavy machinery to get to the trail. White estimated a savings of more

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LAKE RANGERS LOOK FORWARD TO FALL

By Ranger MATT MAJORS
Falls Lake State Recreation Area

On hot and crowded Sunday afternoons in the summer, it's easy to forget that rangers at Falls Lake State Recreation Area are also resource-management oriented. But as the crowds thin, the anticipation grows of fall and the opportunity to "get back into the woods."

As you pass Woodpecker Ridge, Wildlife Management Area or enter any of Falls Lake's seven access areas in cooler weather, the park staff's interest in wildlife and their habitat becomes more apparent.

Falls Lake rangers specialize in many different areas of resource management. Most park staff assist with such tasks as deer counts, monthly eagle observation, bird counts, construction and installation of artificial fish reefs, management of fields for all types of species and nest box management programs for bats, bluebirds, warblers, wood ducks and others. If it nests in a cavity, we probably have an artificial cavity for it somewhere in the park.

Brian Hahn, lead resource management ranger, works with approximately 500 acres of parkland under burn prescription. This land is on a three- to five-year rotation for burning with burn tracts ranging from three to more than 50 acres.

Ranger Brian Bockhahn organizes and participates in more than 50 studies and monitoring programs each year including reptile and amphibian studies, butterfly and moth counts, and numerous bird counts. He also organizes the Falls Lake



LARRY WILKINS, LEFT, HELPS BRYAN DOWDY WITH BIRD BANDING PROJECT AT FALLS LAKE.

Christmas Bird Count and has almost single handedly entered all data in the Falls Lake flora and fauna inventory.

Superintendent Bryan Dowdy initiated a very successful multi-agency cooperative waterfowl banding effort in the early 1990s and continues today with assistance from myself. Falls Lake has received praise from many NC Wildlife Resources Commission personnel on the success of the banding efforts of the North American wood duck. The past two years have yielded more than 160 birds banded combined with more than 15 interpretive programs to interested groups about waterfowl management and ecology at the banding site.

Falls Lake has many dedicated individuals "working for wildlife," and it's an exciting change from the crowds of the summer months. For questions or volunteer/educational opportunities call Falls Lake at 919-676-1027.

HANGING ROCK CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

than \$100,000 in labor costs just in the transportation of the rocks, not including the cost of clearing a path to the trail and then efforts to repair the damage to the environment that heavy machinery would have caused.

While the park got its trail renovated just in time for the holidays, National Guard aviators and ground personnel gained valuable experience. During the trail renovation, the park was designated as a National Guard training site. Often, during combat and state duty emergency situations, National Guardsmen are required to lift loads of different sizes and weights, so lifting the rocks for the trail allowed guardsmen to train for future situations.

The trail project is not the first time the

parks system has utilized the National Guard. In addition to work at Hanging Rock, the guard has helped construct bridges at William B. Umstead and Raven Rock state parks.

Wagoner said the success of the trail project was a combination of good design, environmentally conscious contractors and the ability to use the National Guard. The project contractor was Open Space Management of Great Barrington, Mass., subcontractor was Unturned Stone of Asheville, and designer was Kimley-Horne of Raleigh. The project was funded by a \$247,000 allocation from the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund approved a year and a half ago, and the project bid was accepted before emergency budget restrictions took effect.

TIMING JUST RIGHT AT MORROW MTN.

ALBEMARLE – Timing is everything, according to Tim McCree, superintendent at Morrow Mountain State Park.

McCree took advantage of a September drawdown of Lake Tillery by Carolina Power & Light Co. to gain a new fishing pier and waterfront boardwalk at the park. Knowing that the drawdown was imminent, he approached CP&L for a donation to build the facilities.

CP&L came through with a \$5,000 donation, enough for materials to build a 180-foot boardwalk that spans a wetland area — linking the park's boat ramp with a parking lot — plus a 120-foot-long, 12-foot-wide fishing pier near the park's boat house. The donation was transferred to the park through the Friends of State Parks, a nonprofit group that works with the NC Division of Parks and Recreation to develop park amenities.

The facilities were built in late September with the help of inmates from the Southern Correctional Center in Montgomery County.

CP&L regularly drains the lake to allow scheduled inspections of the lake's dam, McCree said.

"We approached CP&L with the idea because the lake drawdown offered an unusual opportunity to build the pier and boardwalk more easily and more cheaply," McCree said. "They were very receptive and responded quickly so that we could take advantage of the opportunity."

Emerson Gower, vice president of CP&L's southern region, said, "We were certainly excited about participating in



CP&L DONATED FUNDS FOR THIS FISHING PIER ON LAKE TILLERY AND A BOARDWALK AT MORROW MOUNTAIN STATE PARK BUILT DURING A PERIOD OF LAKE DRAWDOWN.

this project. Anytime we can help make a positive environmental or community impact, we try to get involved. This was a perfect opportunity."

The power company began in 1991 to draw down the lake levels at five-year intervals for dam inspections. During the last such event, the park was able to construct the boat ramp and small pier alongside it, McCree said.

CP&L has been a frequent benefactor to Morrow Mountain, one of North Carolina's oldest state parks that was developed as a Civilian Conservation Corps project in the 1930s.

In the mid-1990s, the company sponsored a volunteer day at the park. Projects completed during the single day included a new walkway at the office, a split rail fence, and improvements to camping sites and trails.

The new boardwalk and fishing pier are not yet open to the public. McCree said that additional funds are being sought through the park system's regular capital budget to link the new facilities with existing pedestrian walkways. When completed, the new facilities will be handicapped accessible, he said.

REMEMBER. . .

THE STEWARD IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR IDEAS AND SUBMISSIONS FROM STAFF IN OUR PARKS.

WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR PARK? SEND ALONG YOUR IDEAS, STORIES AND PHOTOS TO THE PUBLIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT.

Division of Parks and Recreation Monthly Attendance Report

	DECEMBER	TOTAL YTD	DECEMBER	TOTAL YTD	% CHANGE	
	2001	DEC. 2001	2000	DEC. 2000	(2000/2001)	
DISTRICT/PARK					DEC.	YTD
EAST DISTRICT						
Cliffs of the Neuse	4,488	132,821	1,660	120,107	170%	11%
Fort Macon	46,750	1,265,986	30,808	1,263,350	52%	0%
Goose Creek	8,064	118,392	4,477	117,432	80%	1%
Hammocks Beach	7,590	196,486	4,107	180,402	85%	9%
Jockey's Ridge	21,232	993,198	17,218	1,039,880	23%	-4%
Merchants Millpond	4,453	85,080	3,243	86,721	37%	-2%
Pettigrew	3,927	88,987	3,320	77,092	18%	15%
SUBTOTAL	96,504	2,880,950	64,833	2,884,984	49%	0%
NORTH DISTRICT						
Eno River	17,997	319,393	13,846	275,231	30%	16%
Occoneechee Mountain	2,097	35,786	1,292	29,118	62%	23%
Falls Lake	19,004	1,146,181	60,371	770,415	-69%	49%
Hanging Rock	14,126	405,342	8,950	398,749	58%	2%
Kerr Lake	50,764	1,444,344	44,616	1,466,912	14%	-2%
Medoc Mountain	2,668	69,177	2,352	75,078	13%	-8%
Pilot Mountain	18,368	428,659	11,999	380,059	53%	13%
William B. Umstead	25,013	401,636	20,554	404,973	22%	-1%
SUBTOTAL	150,037	4,250,518	163,980	3,800,535	-9%	12%
SOUTH DISTRICT						
Boones Cave	734	32,950	814	35,299	-10%	-7%
Carolina Beach	10,985	258,057	7,732	224,751	42%	15%
Fort Fisher	30,250	668,776	17,034	521,193	78%	28%
Jones Lake	3,608	116,066	3,580	112,898	1%	3%
Jordan Lake	28,144	1,230,872	17,852	1,188,368	58%	4%
Lake Waccamaw	4,080	102,430	3,656	70,471	12%	45%
Lumber River	3,135	53,026	2,998	43,730	5%	21%
Morrow Mountain	11,440	494,700	9,840	385,140	16%	28%
Raven Rock	6,470	121,255	3,576	111,695	81%	9%
Singletary Lake	696	13,230	664	16,147	5%	-18%
Weymouth Woods	2,406	27,911	1,504	26,497	60%	5%
SUBTOTAL	101,948	3,119,273	69,250	2,736,189	47%	14%
WEST DISTRICT						
Crowder's Mountain	16,461	296,316	9,078	297,635	81%	0%
Gorges	6,123	101,911	3,936	89,262	56%	14%
Lake James	6,756	243,248	6,400	228,256	6%	7%
Lake Norman	13,704	257,857	7,044	241,787	95%	7%
Mount Jefferson	4,900	93,820	4,076	92,621	20%	1%
Mount Mitchell	15,584	556,558	1,195	556,604	1204%	0%
New River	8,688	134,352	4,064	132,055	114%	2%
South Mountains	8,358	186,242	6,852	159,580	22%	17%
Stone Mountain	30,280	534,194	18,460	677,574	64%	-21%
SUBTOTAL	110,854	2,404,498	61,105	2,475,374	81%	-3%
SYSTEMWIDE TOTAL	459,343	12,655,239	359,168	11,897,082	28%	6%

1/29/02

FLAG FINISHING TOUCH AT FORT MACON

For years, Fort Macon State Park has been undergoing restoration — from waterproofing its roof, to repointing brick, to installing a new drainage system for the moat.

Most of the restoration has involved the fort's structure, so these changes often go unnoticed to the casual visitor's eyes. But, the 80-foot flagpole that was recently installed at the park is one feature that will never go unnoticed.

Jody Merritt, park superintendent, said every aspect of the restoration has been as historically accurate as possible, and the flagpole is no exception. Designed to replicate the fort's original 19th-Century, wooden flagpole, the new aluminum flagpole stands at the same height as the original and in the same location, the north corner of the fort. It replaces a telephone pole that had flown the fort's flags for decades.

Even the fort's two flags are historically accurate, down to a couple feet! The flag normally flown is 12 by 18 feet, and the one flown on special occasions — such as holidays, dedication ceremonies and meetings — is 20 by 38 feet, only a

couple feet wider than the original.

Because of the height of the pole and the size of the flags, the landmark can be seen from Morehead City and Beaufort, and even from the high-rise bridge to Atlantic Beach three miles away. The flag can be seen both day and night as the pole is illuminated with temporary lighting. And, as Marines embark on ships from Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point air station, they pass within viewing distance of the flag.

"This stands out for the community to see, and they love it," Merritt said. "It's been great that we've had the funds to be as historically accurate as we have been. (Restoring the fort) has been a long, time-consuming process, but

when we finish, it'll be worth it."

The pole was installed Nov. 29 by Simpson Construction and was funded by division construction monies. The fort is looking into the costs of installing permanent lighting for the flag.



Mission

The mission of the North Carolina Division of Parks & Recreation is:



to protect North Carolina's natural diversity;

to provide and promote outdoor recreation opportunities throughout North Carolina;

to exemplify and encourage good stewardship of North Carolina's natural resources

and

for all citizens and visitors of North Carolina.

The Steward

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